

THE CLEVELAND
MUSEUM OF ART
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CLEVELAND, OHIO
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August 20, 1992

**MUSEUM ANNOUNCES DEATH OF DOROTHY G. SHEPHERD,
RETIRED CHIEF CURATOR OF TEXTILES AND ISLAMIC ART**

Dorothy G. Shepherd, retired Chief Curator of Textiles and Islamic Art at The Cleveland Museum of Art, died Thursday, August 13, in Asheville, North Carolina.

Miss Shepherd was an internationally recognized authority on ancient Near Eastern and Islamic art and medieval textiles. She was a pioneer in the fields of Spanish Islamic and Central Asian textiles and was particularly interested in medieval textiles from Iran and Iraq and Iranian art of the Sasanian period.

When she retired from the Museum in 1981, after 34 years of service, Museum Director Sherman E. Lee said, "Miss Shepherd has no peer in the field of early and medieval textiles--East or West--and her publications on early Near Eastern textiles have been truly seminal works. Under her direction, the Museum's textile holdings (which include the largest and most complete collection of medieval Persian textiles in the world) have developed into unparalleled assemblies of beautiful and important works."

Born in Welland, Ontario, Canada, on August 15, 1916, Dorothy Shepherd grew up in Fenton, Michigan. She attended the University of Michigan, specializing in Islamic art. In 1939 she received her B.A., and in 1940, an M.A. from the University's Department of Oriental Civilizations. She began studies for her doctorate at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, and in 1942 was appointed Assistant to the Curator of the Cooper Union Museum, New York, in charge of the textile collection. She resigned this position in 1944 to work with the

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Office of War Information in England and Luxembourg, and was later transferred to the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Division of the U.S. Military Government in Germany where she assisted in recovering works of art hidden during World War II. After the War she returned to the U.S. to continue her doctoral studies.

She joined The Cleveland Museum of Art as Associate Curator of Textiles in 1947 and within a few years was named Curator of that department. In 1955 she was put in charge of the Museum's collection of Near Eastern art and was appointed Adjunct Professor of Near Eastern Art at Case Western Reserve University. During this time she received several fellowships and a Ford Foundation grant to research Hispano-Islamic textiles in Spain. In 1979 she was named Chief Curator of Textiles and Islamic Art. Following her retirement, she continued to serve as a research consultant to the Museum.

Miss Shepherd lectured frequently at conferences, seminars, and exhibitions on textiles and Near Eastern art, both in the U.S. and abroad. In addition to the many articles that she contributed to various scholarly journals, especially *The Bulletin of The Cleveland Museum of Art*, she wrote the chapter on Sasanian art for the *Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. III (Cambridge University Press, 1983), and contributed a chapter on the role of Iran in artistic exchanges between East and West in Theodore Bowie's *East-West in Art* (Indiana University Press, 1966). She was on the Directing Council of the Centre International d'Etude des Textiles Anciens, headquartered in Lyon, France; a trustee of the American Institute of Iranian Studies; and a member of the Board of Governors of the American Research Center in Egypt, among other affiliations. At her death, she was completing an important study on Sasanian iconography and working on a three-volume publication on medieval textiles.

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Miss Shepherd was married to the late Ernst Payer, a well-known Cleveland architect who practiced in his native Austria and in New York before moving to Cleveland, and who shared his wife's interest in medieval and Near Eastern culture. Both lectured frequently on the art and architecture which they studied on their extensive travels in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia.

She is survived by her sister, Mary Shepherd Slusser, of Washington, D.C., a noted anthropologist and authority on the culture of Nepal, and two stepsons, Peter Payer of Vienna, Austria, and Mark Payer of Canada.

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